CLIMATE PROGRAM OFFICE

Climate Test Bed Program

How can researchers transition new methods and products from "experimental" to "prime time" operational climate forecasting?

What is the path to promote promising research practices to benefit the public?

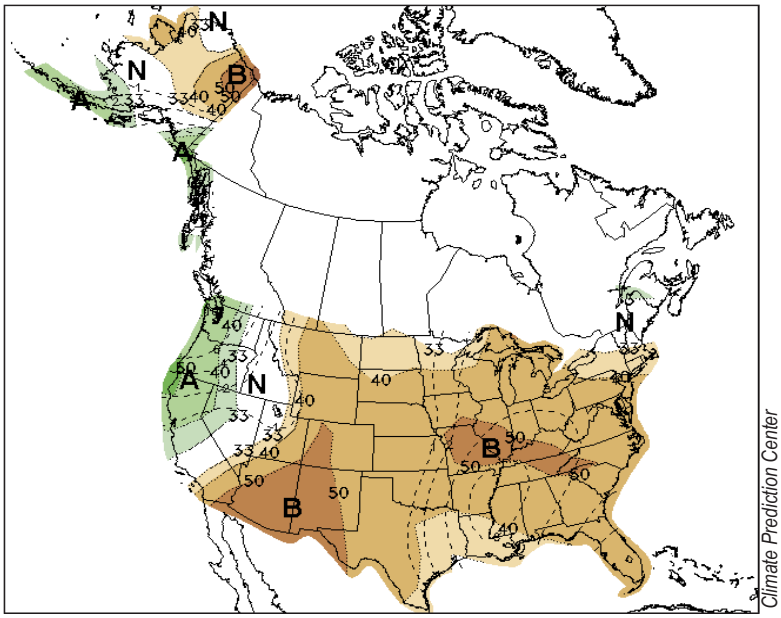
The Climate Test Bed (CTB) program at the National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) works to accelerate the transition of research and development into improved operational climate products and applications. CTB projects are funded via a competitive grants process which brings scientists from the research community and NCEP together to work on high-priority enhancements to climate forecast operations.

Objectives

CTB provides an operational testing environment for assessing and implementing scientific breakthroughs and new techniques that will improve NOAA forecast operations. CTB offers a clear path for scientists who want to use cutting-edge research technologies to improve products and methodologies and make them operational. Such forecasting and applications products and methodologies are highly useful for researchers and decision-makers (for example, leading to better management of water resources during drought).

Approaches

CTB funding supports the evaluation and improvement of climate forecasts that are produced using multiple models working in tandem. Priority areas include improving the NCEP Climate Forecast System on monthly-to-seasonal timescales and enhancement of drought outlook products and applications for implementation into the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) and Drought Early Warning System.



A U.S. precipitation outlook for November 2008. Green areas were predicted to have above average precipitation and tan below average.

CTB Highlight

Many CTB projects seek to improve access to, and usability of, forecast products. To this end, the CTB program funded a group at the University of Arizona to develop a robust Climate Information Delivery and Decision Support System (CLIDDSS) that allows users to more efficiently access and analyze climate data.

People who use decision support Websites may find that they need to enter the same information each time they use the Website. CLIDDSS streamlines and organizes Web searches: the system allows users to collect and store products from different information sources and save a history of work and analysis performed with each product. Thus, users can return quickly to a particular product at any time and repeat past analyses using updated datasets. CLIDDSS also allows users to share product suites and analyses with other users. CLIDDSS saves users time, increases efficiency, and allows for interdisciplinary networking. This product is still in a development phase but it could be operational in mid-2009.

Climate Test Bed Program http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/ctb/

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